

February 2014



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Sonoma-Marín County FSA Updates

Sonoma-Marín County FSA Office

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County Executive Director:
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Farm Loan Officer:
Karri Bartolomei

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Cecilia Medina

**Next County Committee
Meeting:** April 8 at 10:00 am

Emergency Conservation Program (ECP)

The **Emergency Conservation Program (ECP)** is a cost-share assistance program for eligible producers during periods of severe drought to supply emergency water for livestock, including confined livestock and poultry.

The following permanent practices may be eligible to receive 75% cost-share assistance:

- Buried Pipeline for transporting water for livestock
- Construction and deepening of wells for livestock water only
- Troughs when mounted on concrete or similar foundation
- Solar panels to provide power to pump water for livestock
- Permanently installed submersible pumps that would address needs of livestock on hand

The following temporary practices may be eligible to receive 50% cost-share assistance:

- Above-ground pipelines for transporting livestock water
- Spring developments
- Earthen tanks where a source of underground water is available
- Dugouts and development of seeps
- Portable water troughs, stock tanks or tubs.

Hauling water to livestock is also available for cost share assistance.

Components NOT authorized for cost-share assistance:

- Constructing pipelines to supply water for vegetable or other short-term crops
- Establishing permanent or temporary vegetative cover
- Livestock water facilities to make it possible to graze crop residues, field borders, temporary or supplemental pasture crops
- Water facilities primarily for headquarters
- Livestock water facilities to provide water on land on which the cover will be used for hay, silage, and/or field chopped and hauled to headquarters for feeding
- Dry wells
- Above-ground pumps or motors.

Sign-up for ECP began on February 11, 2014 and will end March 27, 2014.

Please contact the Sonoma-Marín County Farm Service Agency office if you are interested in participating in Emergency Conservation Program and to schedule an onsite inspection.

Microloans

FSA offers applicants a Microloan designed to help farmers with credit needs of \$35,000 or less. The loan features a streamlined application process built to fit the needs of new and smaller producers. This loan program will also be useful to specialty crop producers and operators of community supported agriculture (CSA). Eligible applicants can apply for a maximum amount of \$35,000 to pay for initial start-up expenses such as hoop houses to extend the growing season, essential tools, irrigation and annual expenses such as seed, fertilizer, utilities, land rents, marketing, and distribution expenses. Individuals interested in applying for a microloan or would like to discuss other farm loan programs available, should contact the Farm Loan Staff in the Mendocino office at (707)468-9225.

Security Requirements

For annual operating purposes, microloans must be secured by a first lien on a farm property or agricultural products having a security value of at least 100 percent of the microloan amount, and up to 150 percent, when available. Microloans made for purposes other than annual operating expenses must be secured by a first lien on a farm property (chattel) or agricultural products purchased with loan funds and having a security value of at least 100 percent of the microloan amount. The repayment term may vary and will not exceed seven years. Annual operating loans are repaid within 12 months or when the agricultural commodities produced are sold..

County Committee Election Results

The Sonoma-Marín County Office Committee Elections took place on January 22, 2014. The election areas this year were local administrative area (LAA#4) or east of Hwy 101, north of Rohnert Park

Expressway area. Jennifer Crane was elected COC member for LAA#4 for a three year term. Mitch Black will serve as 1st Alternate. Also up for election this year was local administrative area (LAA#5) or West of Hwy 101, north of Sebastopol area. Robert Weinstock was elected COC member for LAA#5 for a three year term. Dennis DeLaMontanya will serve as 1st Alternate. Thanks to all who voted for your agricultural representative.

Elected county committee members serve a three-year term and are responsible for making decisions on FSA disaster, conservation, commodity, and price support programs, as well as other important federal farm program issues.

County committee members are a valuable asset because they are comprised of local producers who participate in FSA programs themselves and have a direct connection to farmers and ranchers in the community.

For more information about county committees and the election process, please contact your local FSA Office or visit www.fsa.usda.gov.

Farm Loans

Sonoma-Marin Counties have been declared disaster counties. Producers may now apply for low interest **emergency loans** for help in recovering from production and physical losses due to extreme drought. Producers have eight months from the date of the declaration to apply for this assistance. The maximum emergency loan amount is \$500,000.

Other Loans. A variety of financing options are available through FSA for your farming needs. Contact Farm Loan Staff located in the Mendocino FSA office for information on loan options that may be available. The phone number is (707) 468-9225.

Acreage Reporting Deadline Dates

Producers should file a crop acreage report each year. Filing an accurate acreage report for all crops and land uses, including failed acreage and prevented planting acreage can prevent the loss of benefits for a variety of programs. Failed acreage must be reported within 15 days of the disaster event and before disposition of the crop. Prevented planting must be reported no later than 15 days after the final planting date. Acreage reports are required for many Farm Service Agency programs. For all crops, including Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) crops, acreage reports are to be certified by the deadline for each crop. For exact deadlines on certifications for each type of crop and late filed acreage reporting provisions, call the County Office for information.

2014 Crop Acreage Reporting Dates

05/31/2013 Container Nursery
09/15/2013 Strawberries planted 6/15/2013 through 8/15/2013
09/30/2013 Value Loss Crops (aquaculture, flowers, Christmas Trees)
12/15/2013 Perennial forage, including native grass for grazing and alfalfa hay
01/02/2014 Honey
01/15/2014 Strawberries planted 8/16/2013 through 11/15/2013
01/15/2014 Avocados, Blueberries, Lemons, Oranges, other Citrus, Sugar Beets
03/15/2014 Barley, Wheat, Oats for Grain or Forage Hay
03/15/2014 Alfalfa seed, Apples, Cherries, Figs, Apricots, Peaches, Nectarines, Pears, Plums, Nut Crops
05/15/2014 Grapes
06/15/2014 Forage for Seed: rye grass, sudan - grasses grown for seed
07/15/2014 Caneberries, Corn, Dry Beans, Tomatoes, Grain Sorghum, Mint, Onions, Rice, Safflower, CRP, Strawberries planted after 11/15/2013, and all other crops

Farm Record Changes

Producers who have bought or sold land, or added or dropped rented land from their operation must report those changes to the FSA office as soon as possible. Official documents, such as a copy of the deed or recorded land contract for purchased property or a signed lease for rented property, is needed to maintain accurate records with FSA. Failure to report changes can lead to possible program ineligibility and penalties. While making record updates, be sure to update signature authorizations. Please contact our office **now** if you have land changes for 2014.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. To file a complaint of discrimination, write: USDA, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (866) 632-9992 (Toll-free Customer Service), (800) 877-8339 (Local or Federal relay), (866) 377-8642 (Relay voice users).